

presents

Signs of Sustainability 2006

# Planning



### Tompkins County Sustainability Team Created in September 2006

Team comprised of representatives from various County departments

Legislature shows support for a Tompkins County government program via Resolution #198

Action Plan being finalized for 2007 and beyond

Team is to report its progress to the Tompkins County Legislature annually by Earth Day



Mayor Carolyn Peterson was one of more than 30 mayors from across the country invited back to Sundance (UT) from November 12–14 for the second annual *Sundance Summit: A Mayors' Gathering on Climate Protection.* The two-day conference, co-hosted by actor and environmentalist Robert Redford, Salt Lake City Mayor Rocky Anderson, and ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), provided mayors the opportunity to discuss and share "best practices" on the most effective, practical and innovative solutions mayors can adopt to reduce greenhouse gas emission.



#### **Local Action Plan:**

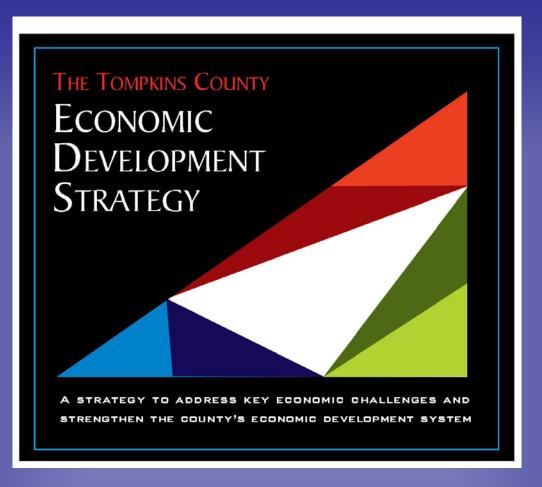
to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions for City of Ithaca Government Operations

City of Ithaca, New York February, 2006 Adopted by Common Council on July 5, 2006

Prepared by Kent Johnson
In cooperation with:
Mayor Carolyn Peterson &
International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives







The Tompkins County Economic Development Strategy organizes the county's economic development service providers into an ED Collaborative that is committed to cultivating a prosperous and sustainable regional economy.



In February 2006, Ithaca College President Peggy Williams, flanked by her senior leadership and other campus leaders, signed the Talloires Declaration, an international commitment to campus sustainability. Developed by University Leaders for a Sustainable Future, the Talloires Declaration 10-point action plan has been signed by over 325 colleges and universities worldwide.



The idea of the Cayuga Inlet Sustainability Corridor is offered as both a unifying vision for various proposed development projects and a geographic location for making sustainability a reality.



PreparedTompkins.org assists households to establish optimal levels of short-term and long-term preparedness as part of a larger community effort to build countywide self-sufficiency

Preparedness = Resiliency + Sustainability

# Policy



2006 was a big year for farmland protection in Tompkins County. Utilizing state and federal grants, in early August the development rights were purchased on a beautiful 450 acre dairy farm in Lansing.



In October, grant awards were announced for the protection of two other dairy farms in Lansing and Dryden, totaling nearly 1400 acres.



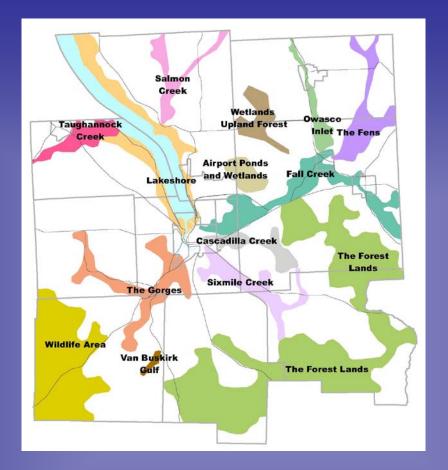
The goal of the program is to help farmers continue agricultural operations and maintain the agricultural soils and land base for future farming endeavors while at the same time conserving scenic roadside resources, open space and unique natural habitats.



The outstanding scenic resources in Tompkins County have been - for the first time - comprehensively documented, evaluated, and prioritized. The Scenic Resources Inventory includes a total of 593 documented views, as well as a list of the 25 Distinctive Views, 30 Noteworthy Views, and 10 categories of Characteristic Scenic Views.



The Scenic Resources Inventory is intended to lay the foundation for local planning efforts in scenic resources management.



The goal of the **Tompkins County Natural Features Focus Areas** is to:
(1) define the natural, economic, recreational, and aesthetic benefits provided by lands in Tompkins County; and
(2) develop a strategic approach to protecting and managing these lands

that includes working cooperatively with landowners, municipalities, and relevant agencies and organizations.

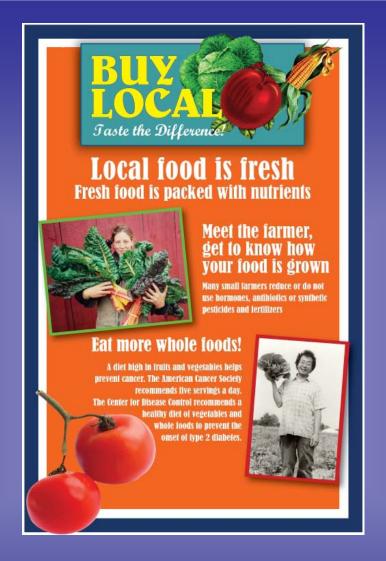


Deputy Commissioner of Planning, Joan Jurkowich, presents on the Tompkins County Natural Features Focus Areas at a public meeting in McLean.

## Food



Lael Gerhart from Cornell Cooperative Extension explains the benefits of local foods during the Energy Fair for Sustainability at the Ithaca Festival.



#### Initiated in 2006, the community-based **Buy Local Food Campaign**

is working to develop an equitable and sustainable food system that fosters the social, environmental, and economic health of our region.



Cayuga Pure Organic's goal is to create a sustainable source of locally-grown and processed organic dry beans, whole grains and associated products for Ithaca and central New York. A major component of this mission is to reduce non-renewable energy needs of our farming and processing operations by developing reduced-tillage cropping practices and increasing our use of renewable energy.



Ithaca Bakery founded Cayuga Coffee with a commitment to offer coffee that is 100% Fair Trade and 100% delicious. Furthermore, almost all our varieties are also certified organic. We believe that the coffee farmers in Latin America, Africa, and South America and Asia deserve a square deal for their work, and to that end, we have committed time, conscious effort and a serious investment to make Cayuga Coffee as good as it can be — in practice as much as in flavor.



GreenStar offers a wide variety of products to complement a green menu and a green lifestyle.



United as a community-owned cooperative, GreenStar's members and shoppers support our growing and vibrant community.





It takes a Village . . .









... to build a root cellar.







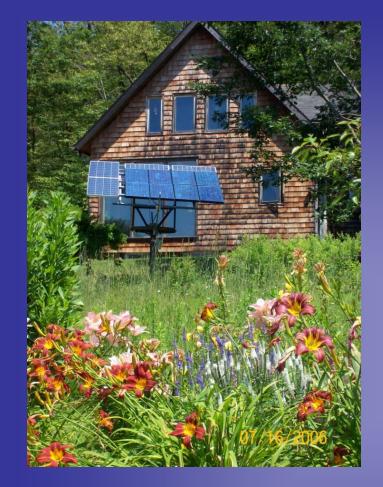
Ecovillage at Ithaca's root cellar was born of a collaboration between EcoVillagers, Ithaca College students, and local green builders that models elements of social sustainability. EVI will store vegetables for Common House meals in the root cellar all winter long without energy inputs, demonstrating that eating locally is possible year-round in our region.

### Shelter



Throughout the Northeast, homes and other buildings are taking advantage of clean renewable energy and other green building technologies.

On Saturday, October 7th from 10am to 4pm, more than 400 of these buildings opened their doors to the public for the Green Buildings Open House, featuring the National Solar Tour.





Steve Nicholson's completely off-the-grid home is one of the featured sites on the annual Solar Tour.

There were 14 buildings on the tour this year in Tompkins County, with 300 people attending. This leads the New England area!



#### GREEN BUILDING FAIR

sponsored by the Ithaca Green Building Alliance was held at the Ithaca Farmers Market

Visitors learned about designing, building, and remodeling homes and businesses using natural materials and energy-efficient, environmentally responsible technologies and techniques. Exhibitors were local architects and designers, builders, timber frame and straw bale specialists, living roof suppliers, and renewable energy system designers and installers.





Ithaca College broke ground in May 2006 on the new home for its School of Business, designed in collaboration with Robert A. M. Stern Architects to achieve LEED™ Platinum rating, the highest level of high-performance sustainable design developed by the U.S. Green Building Council.

## Transportation





In an effort to create a more sustainable public transportation system, Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit purchased six new hybrid buses. The first three buses will arrive in January.

The hybrid buses will have a 25% better fuel efficiency rate.

With the six hybrid buses on the road, more than 9,000 gallons of fuel and \$26,000 in fuel costs will be saved each year.



The City of Ithaca purchased its first hybrid vehicle in 2006.

The City plans to investigate other types of alternatively fueled vehicles as well, such as plug-in electric designs, and is considering transitioning some of its diesel fleet to use renewable bio-diesel fuel.





Ithaca Carshare was awarded \$177,220 by NYSERDA and the NYS Department of Transportation to support its first two years of operation. The first carsharing services will start at EcoVillage in Spring 2007. New "pods" are expected to located at Ithaca College, Cornell University and in downtown locations by Fall 2007.

Not bad at all for something that was just a bright idea in January 2006.



Katy Nicholson checking out an alternative transportation mode at the Energy Fair at the Ithaca Festival.

The ten members of Ithaca Biodiesel Cooperative found a new home in Renovus Energy on Cherry Street in Ithaca.



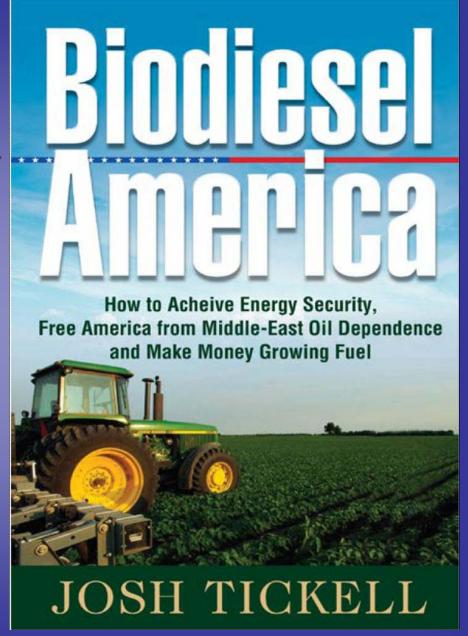
This year, Mark Wienand, founding member of Ithaca Biodiesel, converted more than 25 vehicles to run on straight vegetable oil.

He is one of America's leading experts in vehicle conversions.



Meghan Murphy, founding member of Ithaca Biodiesel, researched and edited the book *Biodiesel America* by Josh Tickell, author of *From the Fryer to the Fuel Tank.* 

Biodiesel America is on sale now at the cooperative with 100% of the proceeds going to Ithaca Biodiesel.



Ithaca Biodiesel supports EarthRace, an attempt to win the world record for circumnavigating the globe in a power boat.

No one has ever attempted the record on a renewable fuel and EarthRace is using 100% biodiesel for the race.



# Energy



The New York Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) sponsored this year's Energy Fair For Sustainability, in conjunction with the Ithaca Festival.

Above: *Energy\$mart's* interactive display of energy use.



Gay Nicholson explains the *Energy\$mart* program to Skip Parr at **America Recycles Day Fair.** 





In 2006, the City of Ithaca reduced fossil fuel consumption by purchasing 350,000 kWh of wind-generated electricity.

This purchase supplied 81% of
City Hall's electricity needs
(5% of the City's overall electric needs)
and reduced the City's GHG emissions
by 135 tons of eCO2.



In 2006, the City of Ithaca completed its transition to using high-efficiency LED bulbs for city traffic signals.

Already, the City is saving money as electricity use for traffic signals has been reduced by 90% (or reduced by 520,000 kWh per year) – a savings of around \$60,000 (and 200 tons of eCO2) per year.







In 2006, the City of Ithaca and consultant Johnson Controls, Inc. worked to finalize a multi-year plan to drastically reduce the City's energy consumption through implementation of numerous energy efficiency projects for City buildings.



The proposed plan will reduce the City's GHG emissions by about 700 tons of eCO2 per year – equivalent to reducing car miles driven by 2,250,000 miles each year!



#### Among the projects to be undertaken are:



City Hall roof replacement





City Hall windows replacement

Police Department boiler



#### Other energy-saving projects include:



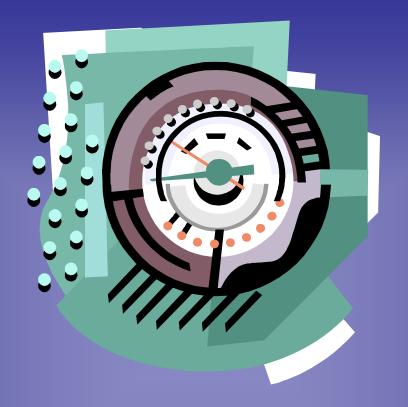
Police Department roof and windows replacement



Police Department boiler



Lighting retrofits



Beginning in May 2006, Ithaca College Facilities Maintenance announced the implementation of new thermostat temperature set points in all buildings across campus. During the cooling season the set point will be fixed between 74-76° degrees, and during the heating season, thermostats will be set between 69-71°.

Projected annual savings from this simple change range from \$125,000 to \$200,000.

## **Energy Independent Caroline**

Energy Independent Caroline is a collaborative effort between residents, Town Board, and other interested people to effectively use our natural resources to achieve energy independence from fossil fuels on a municipal and residential level.

Goal: To install enough Wind Power capacity to meet the needs of all residents in the Town – about 2-3 megawatts

1 MW of wind generation =1 square mile of new forest displacing carbon dioxide from conventional generating sources



1 MW turbine displaces: 2,734,872 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> 9,918 pounds of SO<sub>2</sub>, and 3,679 pounds of NOx

## Tompkins Renewable Energy Education Alliance sponsored a panel discussion "Community-Owned Wind Farms: How about Connecticut Hill?"

on October 25 at Ithaca College



Developer John Rancich was a panelist in a discussion that included John Confer, (avian biologist at IC), Jason Hamilton, (global change scientist at IC), Steve Nicholson (Tompkins County Environmental Management Council), W.S. (Lanny) Joyce, P.E. (energy manager at Cornell), and Annie Koreman (Sierra Club Conservation Chair).

The panel was moderated by Gay Nicholson (NYSERDA Energy \$mart Coordinator).

## Resource Use

### Finger Lakes Permaculture Institute

A project of the Cayuga Nature Center

Permaculture is a system for the sustainable design of human culture, focusing around ecological restoration and the providing of basic human needs.

FLPI's goal is to create a demonstration site for sustainable living based upon the principles and methods of permaculture.

 observe current systems of both human and nonhuman invention

- learn from their success and failures
- design systems that put humans and the natural world in harmony
- apply designs to current and new human infrastructure









The Finger Lakes Permaculture Institute (FLPCI) is committed to bringing affordable and high quality sustainability education to the Finger Lakes bioregion.

Since its inception in October of 2005, FLPCI has certified 17 individuals in permaculture design and hosted a variety of educational events for the public.

FLPCI partnered with Cayuga Nature Center last summer and is currently offering its third series of classes that explore topics such as economics, waste treatment, gardening, and urban design.



Ithaca College science faculty and students collaborated with groundskeepers to create an alternative landscaping project on the steep northern slope outside the Center for Natural Sciences. The area models low-impact landscaping techniques and has markedly improved biodiversity in the area.



Steve Nicholson from the Environmental Management Council (and Sustainable Tompkins) offers reusable shopping bags and green market baskets at the Sustainability Fair at the Ithaca Festival.



#### **Environmental Management Council's**

#### Bag and basket campaign



To promote the use of reusable shopping containers, the EMC offers plastic shopping baskets and sturdy canvas bags for sale. Plastic grocery bags are convenient, but there are several drawbacks, including increased grocery prices to pay for the free bags, petroleum use to produce the bags, and litter from discarded bags. By using a reusable bag or basket many times, you can reduce the amount of natural resources that you consume, and help to promote environmental awareness.

The ugly truth about our plastic bag addiction is that society's consumption rate is now estimated at well over **500 billion** plastic bags annually, or almost **1 million per minute.** 

The green baskets are made from plastic, with metal handles.

They are imprinted with

"PAPER OR PLASTIC - NO THANK YOU!"



In 2006, The Compost Education Program of
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County
supported the goals of the
Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division
by reducing the amount of compostable materials handled by the County,
thereby reducing the cost of their operations to the taxpayer.

This was achieved by training a diverse and capable group of 15 Master Composters, while supporting 45 previously trained volunteers, to educate their communities and the public at large about the sustainable practice of home composting.

Photo: Julian Euell, Master Composter 2006



A group shot of this year's Master Composter class (and a few previously trained Master Composters) at the **Compost Fair**, held in conjunction with Ithaca Earth Day on April 23, 2006.

Photo: Julian Euell, Master Composter 2006



A picture of Alexis Abramo, Master Composter 2006, showing off our worm bin at the Apple Harvest Festival on the Commons.

Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division, Significant Elements, Cooperative Extension, Ithaca College and Cornell University have been collaborating to produce plans for a local Reuse Center.

The Reuse Center will both divert valuable materials from the waste stream and resell or otherwise make them available to the community.

Accepted materials may include, but are not limited to:

Building materials (old and new)

Appliances

**Furniture** 

Clothing & textiles

Household goods

Computers & home electronics

Art materials

Books





Significant Elements' plumbing warehouse



An example of a Reuse Center:

Recycle North – Household Goods Store, Burlington, VT



The following services will possibly be offered by the Reuse Center:

- Pickup and delivery;
- Deconstruction (the environmental practice of disassembling buildings by hand);
- Repair of select materials;
- Educational workshops on both practical and creative reuse;
- Skill-building workshops and services.





Tompkins County Solid Waste launched the ReBusiness Partners Program in 2006, providing 18 businesses and organizations in the office sector with waste assessments and follow-up reports to assist with waste reduction, recycling and green purchasing initiatives.

The program will expand into the retail and hospitality sectors in 2007.



Ithaca College has phased in 100% post-consumer recycled content letterhead for all campus mailings. Working in partnership with Unisource and Fox River Paper Company, the supervisor of Printing Services reports that this new totally recycled-content paper - which will be equal in performance and appearance to the current letterhead paper - is available at no additional cost.

100% post-consumer-recycled-content multipurpose office paper is being tested in all office equipment and will shortly be made available through College office paper contract.

Hundreds of people visited 2006's **America Recycles Day Fair** at the Pyramid Mall on November 4<sup>th</sup>. The event featured over 50 environmental organizations and businesses who shared information and promoted recycling with live music and theatrical shows.



Stephanie Egan plays recycling games.



Relmagine Design offered a T-Shirt makeover area at America Recycles Day at Pyramid Mall.

















The Sustainable Tompkins Monthly Gathering in November was a "Holiday Go Lightly" craft extravaganza. Here Ithaca College "refashionistas" Lori Bonin and Arielle Wernick instruct an attendee on how to create a fashionable totebag from old Tshirts and other fabrics.



Linnett Short from Tompkins County Solid Waste Division fully equipped a craft room at Cornell Cooperative Extension for the "Holiday Go Lightly" event and showed attendees how to make decorative and functional gifts and gift boxes from found materials like old calendars.



Valorie Rockney and Wendy Skinner, co-organizers, with the two top prize-winning entries in the 2006 Re-Fashion Design Contest – an evening gown made entirely of discarded men's ties, and a wedding dress made from old cotton dress shirts sold by the pound.

## Sustainable Enterprise







The Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan found that self-employment and entrepreneurship are staples of the rural economy with over half of all self-employed workers living in rural parts of Tompkins County.

In an effort to build capacity for self-employed persons and small business owners to enhance the incomes and quality of life of rural residents and expand the local economy, Tompkins County Government partnered with Alternatives Federal Credit Union to offer the Rural Small Business Loan Program.







Alternatives Federal Credit Union provides training, technical assistance, and loan underwriting.

The County funds the loan component of the program, providing low-interest loans to qualified applicants ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000 for equipment and working capital to start up or enhance rural business operations.







Since early 2005, a total of \$69,000 has been loaned to four small business entrepreneurs:
Wildflowers floral shop located in Dryden,
Matt Cooper Furniture Designs located in Danby, and two organic farms, Three Swallows and Remembrance Farms, also located in Danby.









The program is funded by
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
Small Cities Community Development Block Grants
previously awarded to Tompkins County
for economic development projects.

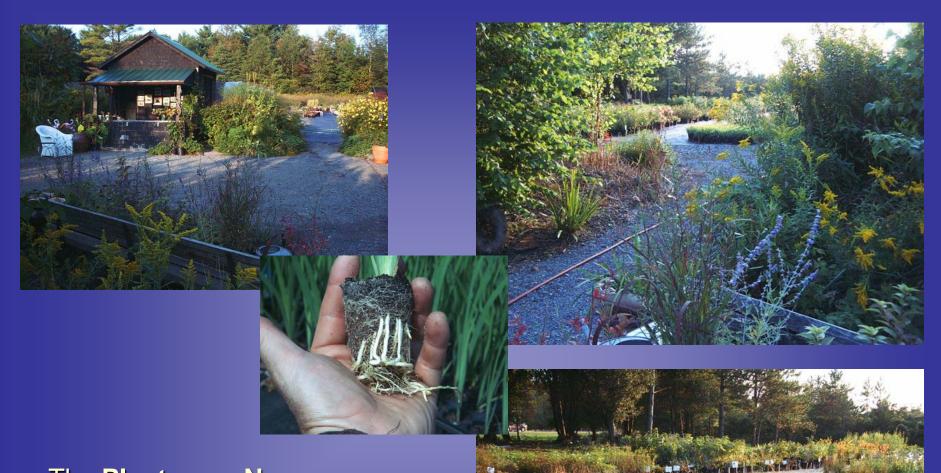
For more information, contact Tompkins County Planning.



The Finger Lakes Buy Green website, a project of Tompkins County Solid Waste Management and Sustainable Tompkins, was launched this fall as a tool to help consumers make wise purchasing decisions. The website features why to buy green, tips on environmentally preferable purchasing, and includes a product directory with samples of green products that are carried at local suppliers. Office supplies are currently featured on the website, with cleaning products, maintenance supplies, and yard and garden supplies soon to follow.



Motherplants is a woman-owned nursery in Ithaca, dedicated to growing plants for green roofs. They specialize in the drought-tolerant, shallow rooted species adapted to extensive and semi-extensive living roofs. They have many species of plug-size plants in stock, and are happy to custom grow any species not in stock, for your project.



The **Plantsmen Nursery** grows native plants locally and without pesticides or herbicides.
We also offer ecological, environmentally friendly design and landscape services.



Jon and Elisabeth Harrod are pleased to announce **Snug Planet LLC.**Our mission is to serve the community and protect the environment by improving the comfort and efficiency of homes.

# Community Development

# The CRESP CENTER for Transformative Action

The CRESP Center for Transformative Action, an affiliate of Cornell University, envisions a world where compassion ignites social innovation.

Our mission is to support social entrepreneurs in developing and advancing innovative projects that create a foundation for a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

We practice, teach, and advocate approaches that transform polarizing positions into a cooperative exploration for creative solutions.



The Ithaca Think Do Tank, formed in May 2006, is a group of environmentally-minded individuals who generate ideas that they then put into action. Projects undertaken by the Think Do Tank include:

- building clotheslines for Ithaca residents;
- having a presence at the Muse Festival, including putting on a waste reduction workshop;
- researching the feasibility of having a sustainability board on the Commons; and
- providing the public with information about reducing one's environmental impact.

Thank *Do* Tank meetings are open to the public, and individuals are always encouraged to bring new ideas.



Participants gather for a morning circle as part of a week-long intensive training at EcoVillage on "Creating Sustainable Communities: The Ecological Dimension." It was adapted from a longer curriculum developed by Gaia Education, an international group of ecovillage educators which EVI helped to start. This curriculum has been recognized by the United Nations as an official part of the UN Decade for Education on Sustainable Development.



This past July, the TC Living Wage Coalition changed our name to the Workers' Center to reflect, more accurately, our extensive work for economic justice in the County.

A significant reason for the name change has to do with our desire to be about organizing with the people who are most directly affected by economic injustice rather than be seen as primarily an issue-oriented campaign, and thus organizing for the people who need the change.



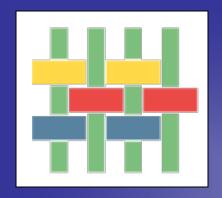
And we can only be sustainable in our work when more and more people get involved/take leadership who are most directly affected by the injustice.

The picture is of our first "member"

of the Workers' Center, Brooke McNally and her daughter, Rose. Brooke and Rose live in Brooktondale.

You can read a bit more about their story at our website, www.TCWorkersCenter.org



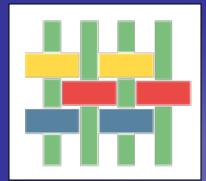


Sustainable Tompkins facilitated a five-month sustainability study circle with Kendal residents and staff.

Improvements in energy and resource conservation were pursued and a "Sustainability Lyceum Series" was launched.







Sustainable Tompkins' recently launched

Just Sustainability Initiative

is attempting to meaningfully integrate

social and economic justice work

with the vision and actions of the local movement

for community sustainability.

It is supporting grass roots sustainable development in Ithaca's Northside and Southside neighborhoods through resident-based study circles; multicultural and youth leadership development; linking previously disparate community groups; increased access to affordable green resources; and mini-grants for model neighborhood projects.



A People's Garden Project garden at the First Baptized Church, 1st St, Northside Neighborhood.



Successful startup businesses are a way to make a town or neighborhood more economically vibrant. But mainstream agencies that help people start and sustain small businesses have often overlooked the minority community. The Multicultural Business Symposium, a brainchild of the Multicultural Resource Center, offered workshops on starting small businesses, best sources for financing a business startup and small business case studies.



Multicultural Business Symposium April 22, 2006 At the end of Summer 2006, over 150 community members representing diverse backgrounds came out to support two community screenings of a "Blockumentary" created by S.T.A.M.P.'s Green Guerrillas Youth Media Techs.



The Blockumentary features local applications of green building and renewable energy technologies, and also adds another perspective to the local efforts to re-name State Street after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Green Guerrillas are local young people who learned how to use computer and video technology to build entrepreneurial job skills, convert a diesel engine to run on vegetable oil, and make a music video for a local hip hop group.



The "50 Served Dinner Program" was initiated to help address the needs of children not receiving healthy and adequate meals. The program was piloted over the summer and was very successful. We began offering the dinner program again in October to the after-school program 3 days a week with an eye towards extending the program to families outside of the GIAC After-School Program population.



### Cayuga Waterfront Trail Farmers Market Trailhead

McPhersons Builders, Bellisario Excavators, Accufab, Cayuga Landscape, Iron Design and others have been working hard on construction of the market trailhead and various furnishings.

This new addition to the market landscape was sponsored by the Triad Foundation, Harry and Myra Brull, and over 300 hundred furnishing and stepping stone donors.

There is still time to donate a stone for the market trailhead; any stones ordered now will be installed by the time the market opens in the spring.



The 2006 Ithaca Alternative Gift Fair was a huge success, bringing in over \$20,000, all of which will go to the participating organizations.

### Education



For three semesters, students in History of U.S. Environmental Thought at Ithaca College have worked with the archivists at the History Center to conduct primary research using the holdings of the Center to investigate Ithaca's environmental past. The students' investigative experience is capped by a public presentation of their findings at the History Center.















Several IC students in a course called "Fostering Sustainable Communities" have become adept at "refashioning", and held a Swaporama this fall, inviting friends in to learn how to transform old clothing and fabric into new fashions.







Ithaca City School Superintendent Judith Pastel is collaborating with the "Science in the Community" team from Ithaca College to support a day-long workshop on sustainability curriculum development, to be conducted by Jaimie Cloud of the Cloud Institute for Sustainability Education. IC faculty and ICSD teachers are invited to the Ithaca College campus on January 31, 2007. ICSD is taking the initiative to have its administrative team go through training on what it means to teach for a sustainable future, as well as provide this special teacher training opportunity.

Dan Flerlage reports that Lehman Alternative Community School decided to adopt a "Belief Statement" which offers a sustainability frame to its democratic decision-making.

The concept was proposed to the school by Dan's ecology class 4-5 years ago. According to process, the entire school discussed the proposal and ultimately voted to adopt it officially.

Since being adopted by majority vote, the statement has acted as a guide for related decisions.

#### **Belief Statement '06**

We believe that the decisions and activities of the LACS community should attempt to align themselves with the health of the members of the community and its environment. In keeping with this, we believe that efforts should be made to reuse, recycle, and compost materials used on site to the best of our ability. Also, we believe that the purchases made to keep our school running should be made locally where possible and with an attempt to minimize any negative environmental impact. Further, we believe that the food made available at LACS should reflect an awareness of its nutritional value and its influence on the nutritional health of those who eat it. Finally, we believe that we should make efforts to use the energy that we consume efficiently and work toward increasing our use of renewable energy sources. Rationale: Personal and environmental health are two major issues intertwined in today's culture. Among other things, it is LACSs Mission: To educate Global Citizens for the 21st century who are contributors to sustaining the natural environment. We should use this worthy mission more actively as a guide for our decisions and activities.





Students at Lehman Alternative Community School have undertaken a number of sustainability projects. LACS has been composting as a whole school for about 6 years. The system was originally designed and built by Dan Flerlage's Ecology class using local black locust. The compost is collected in four locations within the school each day and the responsibility to empty the compost rotates through the entire school.



Another ongoing LACS project is the design and building of raised beds where vegetables are grown for use in our school lunch program. The original beds, representing a 34' mandala and constructed of local black locust, were designed and built by Ecology students in spring 2005. Last year, Ecology students Jesse Wallace and Will Donavan planned and constructed a 7' deer fence around these beds, allowing for a gradual increase in garden size. This year the class will work with a landscape architect, permaculturist, and local organic growers to further envision, design, and develop this space.





This project, developed by '06 **LACS** graduate Abby Dubovi as part of her Ecology class, is a raised bed vegetable garden designed for a group home for disabled adults in Lansing. The garden was built with the help of the residents and used by them to grow food for the house.

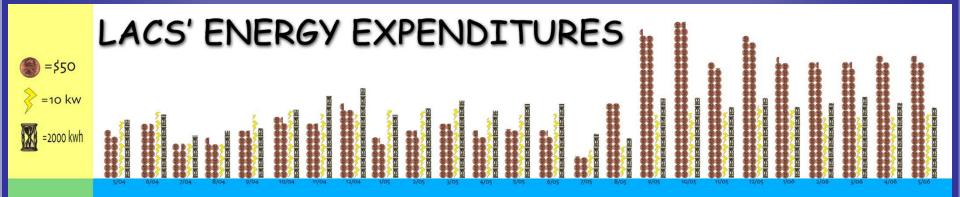


This student project involved the development of a 3-week unit on the relationship between waste, composting, and growing food. The unit - created by four LACS Ecology students: Anna Raymer, Jenna Hollier, Audrey Gray, and Jenny Day - was taught by the LACS students to a 4<sup>th</sup> grade class at Belle Sherman. The LACS students shared with their younger peers the path taken by the trash generated at Belle Sherman, first hauled to the transfer station then on to Seneca Meadows.

Students in Karen Adams' Latin American Studies course and Diane Carruthers' African Studies class sponsor a Fair Trade Breakfast for the community each Spring.

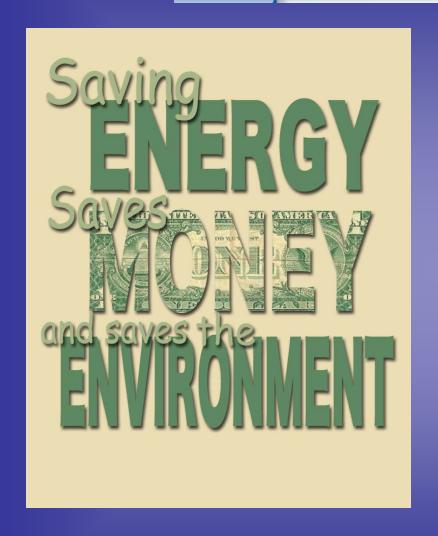
Both courses focus on globalism, human rights, major historical periods, and events that have shaped the politics and economics of these regions.

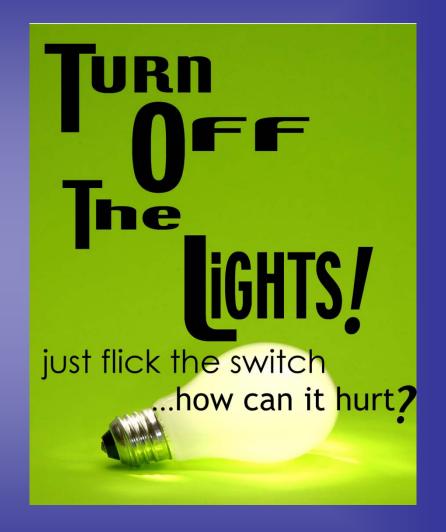
#### Lehman Alternative Community School Nity School



During Fall 2005, LACS participated in a *Energy\$mart Office* "plug load" audit; the auditors presented their findings to the Ecology class. Two students, Alexis Suskin-Sperry and Vivian Strosberg, as their senior project, developed a series of educational materials for an awareness-raising and action campaign to reduce "plug load" energy waste.

#### Lehman Alternative Community School 111 SChool





More of Alexis Suskin-Sperry and Vivian Strosberg's work.

#### Lehman Alternative Community School Nity School



and one more from Alexis Suskin-Sperry and Vivian Strosberg.

#### Lehman Alternative Community School Nity School

Photo: National Renewable Energy Laboratory



LACS '06 graduate Isaac Mandl's senior project involved designing a solar hot water system for his house and also developing a cost/benefit analysis spread sheet. The spreadsheet program allows any user to input parameters specific to their house: hot water budget, solar orientation, etc. The program then offers feedback regarding four of the commercially available hot water collectors, offering comparative information regarding their potential output for that particular site.

This ultimately allows the user to make a more informed decision.

#### Lehman Alternative Community School NITY SCHOOL





Three students in Ecology class at Lehman Alternative Community School: Max Hull, Lindsey Brous, and Derek Murphy, worked in Spring 2006 to help further "green" the Ithaca Festival.



Dan Flerlage, on sabbatic from LACS, worked with Boynton Middle School teacher Cindy Kramer in her 8<sup>th</sup> grade social studies classes to develop a unit built around the concept of "Legacy" to follow Kramer's unit on the Industrial Revolution.

Students researched and created a list of the legacies associated with the Industrial Revolution.

The students then viewed examples of "thinking outside of the box" by William McDonough, Janine Benyus, and John Todd.



Cindy Kramer used this image of the WEEE Man sculpture – composed of the amount of electronic waste the average resident in the U.K. will generate in their lifetime - to spur her students' thinking about design to minimize or eliminate waste products.

WEEE = Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment

Kramer's students then responded to this question:

"How will your generation need to think differently in order to leave a different legacy to your children?"

Some of these 8th graders' answers:

"We need to think differently about how to make the things we need."

"We need to think in a way that lets us build things without destroying the earth. Make machines that can be broken down and reused without polluting."

"We will have to stop wanting so much "stuff" because it creates too much trash."

"We need to be more aware of the products we buy."

"Instead of finding places to put the waste, we need to find ways to use the waste for something productive."

More 8th grade student responses to this question:

### "How will your generation need to think differently in order to leave a different legacy to your children?"

"We need to find a way to turn things like CO2 into something positive and use it to our advantage so that we can benefit from it."

"We are going to have to think of ways to consolidate cities so there is more room for our natural resources to flourish. When this happens it will be easier to distribute energy to fuel houses."

"We need to think of environmental pollution as an emergency."

"I think we need to focus more on global issues."

"We are going to have to think differently about our rising population because if our population keeps growing at this rate, no amount of green energy or conservation will be able save us."

Remember, these were **8**<sup>th</sup> **graders** responding to this question:

"How will your generation need to think differently in order to leave a different legacy to your children?"

'Out of the mouths of babes'...

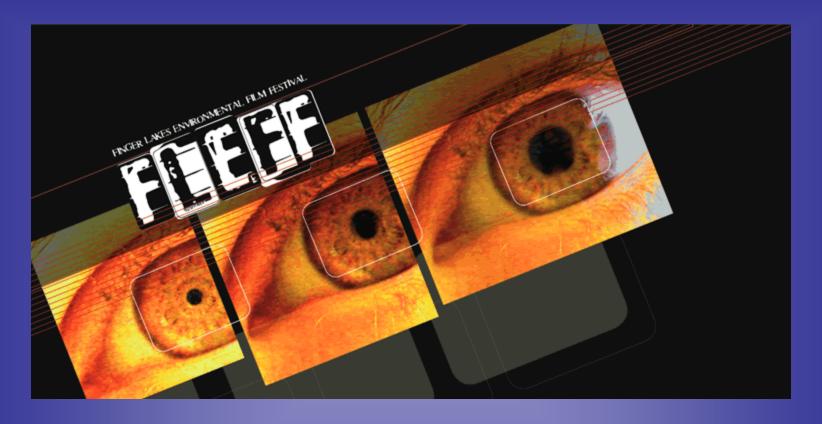
... direct from the compassionate hearts and open minds of some this world's future leaders.

Talk about one of the best signs of sustainability in 2006.

## Communication



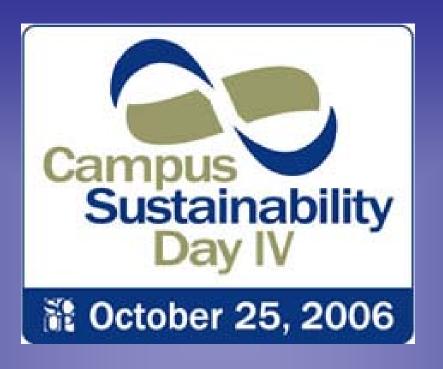
The Hub will provide consumer education, workforce training, and professional development in the areas of green building, renewable energy, and energy efficiency.



The Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival, sponsored by Ithaca College, was bigger than ever. The Festival screened more than sixty films and videos as well as provided a venue for lectures, exhibits, installations, performances, and faculty-moderated discussion groups.



Public screenings of "An Inconvenient Truth", the film about global warming and climate change starring Al Gore, attracted standing-room-only crowds in many local venues, including faith communities.



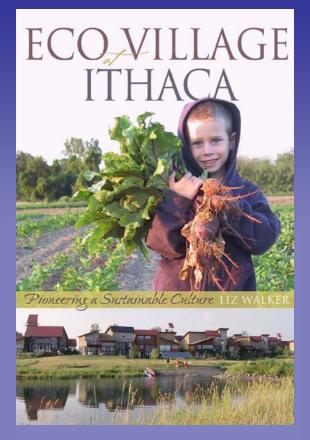
Both Ithaca College and Cornell University observed Campus Sustainability Day, a national observance developed by the Society of College and University Planning. Each campus offered educational events and other programming.



Sandra Steingraber, acclaimed author of "Living Downstream" - who has been heralded by the Sierra Club as "the new Rachel Carson" - recently received a 2006 Heroes Tribute from the Breast Cancer Fund.

The organization annually honors those whose work has advanced its mission of preventing breast cancer by identifying the causes of the disease. Ecologist, author, and herself a cancer survivor, Steingraber is an internationally recognized expert on the environmental links to cancer and reproductive health. She lives near Trumansburg.

"Living Downstream" is in production as a feature-length film.



A new book, "EcoVillage at Ithaca: Pioneering a Sustainable Culture," has been getting great reviews around the world. Permaculture Magazine (published in the U.K.) wrote: "As the age of cheap oil draws to a close, we need living experiments in the reweaving of human-scale, locally-based economies. As an illustration of how we can begin this process, even at the heart of the Empire, EVI is without match. Enormous credit goes to Liz Walker for sharing its story so well with us."



EcoVillage Director Liz Walker has been traveling widely to support the development of ecovillages and cohousing communities in the U.S. and internationally. Here she is in Kyoto with Kiyokazu Shidara, the founder of the Permaculture Institute of Japan, as part of a six city speaking tour which helped to kick off the Japanese ecovillage movement in October, 2006. Mr. Shidara has translated Liz' book into Japanese, and it will be published next year.



GroovyGreen was started as a way to organize the large amounts of information swirling about Ithaca concerning renewable energy and sustainable living.

Over the past few months, GroovyGreen has branched out to cover national and international news, products, and the people fighting to make a difference in promoting sustainability.

Through this website, we hope to get others involved – not just in community events – but also in national and international discussions or organizations that directly affect the *'green movement'*.



Brainchild of Ithacan Michael d'Estries, GroovyGreen is "the place to go" for sustainability news and updates.



Sustainable Tompkins makes a showing at the Earth Day Festival at the Ithaca Farmer's Market.



Sustainable Tompkins offered Energy Fair-goers the opportunity to become part of the rich pattern of our region and to weave their vision for a sustainable community into our interactive obelisk.

# What Signs of Sustainability did you see in 2006?

What sign will you be in 2007?

